



## **Witnesses**

*By Bro. David Betz*

We celebrated the Marianist Martyrs of Ciudad Real on September 18th. They are Carlos Eraña, Jesús Hita, and Fidel Fuidio. For this month's Marianist Moment I would like to share with you a reflection written by Juan Issa, SM. This reflection comes from a pamphlet titled, Witnesses, which was produced by the Province of Spain. Spend some time yourselves reflecting on these words as you consider being witnesses to Jesus and the Marianist Mission. Granted you may not aspire to be a martyr but we are called to share the Good News in all we do and say.

And so they are called *The Martyrs*,  
And we call them *The Witnesses*  
For they gave witness to the end  
With their very lives.

This is not new in the Christian story.  
Jesus said: *You will be persecuted;*  
*You will be put to death;*  
*You will have a fate no different from mine.*

And when the young Church experienced this for the first time  
In the martyrdom of Stephen, the Deacon,  
They understood that here lay the great challenge:

To give witness until the end.

There followed then Peter, Paul, Ignatius, Perpetua, Felicity,  
Lawrence, and an endless list of others.

Continually throughout the ages names have been added,  
As the blood of the martyrs  
Has become the seed of the Church;  
Carlos, Jesús, Fidel  
And on and on, as the story is told.

And it is the same story that is told today.  
A single story which begins in Bethlehem,  
Reaches to the mount of Calvary,  
To the jungles of Asia, to the barrios of Rio,  
To the deserts of Africa,  
To the Gulags of all times and places.  
From the beginning Jesus said:  
*Pray for those who persecute you.*

And the martyrs have died  
Interceding for those who murdered them,  
Forgiving until the end.

And they bore that wondrous fruit which only comes  
From the grain which dies in good earth.